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THE

NEW JERUSALEM MAGAZINE.

VOL. V. — NEW SERIES. — No. 5.

MAY, 1881.

SWEDENBORG'S STATESMANSHIP AND THE CHARGE OF INSANITY.

IT is not many years since it was the common opinion, among all but the few who accepted Swedenborg's religious doctrines, that he was more or less insane; and that opinion is still held by many. Within a few years it has been discovered, that in his scientific works he anticipated some most important truths or theories now generally accepted and regarded as recent discoveries. But these were published before his illumination; and, when they are referred to as proofs of his sanity, it is easy to answer, that his eminent ability *before he was insane* may be incontestable; but that it is perfectly consistent with the fact that his vast mental labor broke down his mind and produced insanity; and that his notion that he had himself gone to heaven and hell while still living on earth, and his tales about spirits of all kinds, are even better proof of his insanity when he wrote such things than the ability and sound sense of his scientific works are of his sanity when he wrote them.

Now, however, we are in possession of conclusive proof, that, at the very time when he was busiest about his spiritual works, and years after his assertion that his spiritual senses were opened, he was actively discharging his important

duties as a member of the Swedish House of Nobles. This he was doing in a way which not only calls to mind his constant teaching, that a truly religious life is one devoted to the performance of all its duties; but which earned for him the respect of his associate nobles, and gave him an acknowledged influence among them, which he used for excellent purposes and with excellent results. All this we learn from a study of the "Documents" which Dr. R. L. Tafel has published. Among them are papers drawn from Swedenborg's own manuscripts, from the records of the House of Nobles, and from other unquestionable sources. These papers contain Swedenborg's own memorials, arguments, and letters, as one of the nobles of Sweden. They speak for themselves. They are upon most important topics. We doubt whether any amount of prejudice or any unexpectedness could cause a reader to deny their sound sense. They seem to us characterized by calm, clear judgment; by earnestness without a spark of enthusiasm; and by an exact appreciation of the relative importance of the results which he seeks to accomplish, and of the best and safest means of reaching them. We do not believe that any series of papers of any statesman, living or dead, would afford more conclusive proof, not merely of entire sanity, but of a clear and vigorous intellect.

Dr. Tafel, in the first volume of his "Documents concerning Swedenborg," has a section entitled "Swedenborg's public life as a member of the House of Nobles." It contains thirty-one documents, and refers to more. We propose in this paper to give only a very brief account of some of the principal documents; such as may indicate their nature, and suggest the conclusions as to Swedenborg's life and character as a statesman to which a careful study of them would lead.

As the eldest child of Bishop Swedberg, all of whose children were ennobled in 1719, he took his seat in the House of Nobles as the representative of his family. He had been appointed Assessor in the Royal College of Mines

in 1717; and was diligently employed in duties connected with that office until 1747, when he resigned it.

Dr. Tafel gives us, in Document 168, a "Memorial on the State of the Finances of Sweden," presented by him to the Diet in 1723; another, in Doc. 169, in the same year, on the production of iron; another, in Doc. 170, on the same subject, in the same year; another, in Doc. 171, in the same year, on the same subject; and another, in Doc. 172, on the impolicy of declaring war against Russia, in 1734. All of these Documents were before his illumination. The next Document is dated in 1755, and, with all the succeeding ones, was written after his illumination in 1744; and it is of them that we would give a brief account.

We would here give the dates of his principal theological works, that it may be seen how busy he was with them at the time he was active as a Swedish noble. The "Arcana Cœlestia," eight volumes, was published 1749 to 1758; "Heaven and Hell," 1758; "New Jerusalem, and its Heavenly Doctrine," 1758; "Four Leading Doctrines," 1763; "Divine Love and Wisdom," 1763; "Divine Providence," 1764; "Apocalypse Revealed," 1766; "Conjugial Love," 1768; "True Christian Religion," 1771. Besides these he wrote, but did not publish, "Apocalypse Explained," in four volumes, probably from 1757 to 1760; and several smaller treatises during this period, some of which he published.

Dr. Tafel begins his chapter on "Swedenborg in the House of Nobles," with an extract from a Swedish work, of which the title translated into English is, "The New Church, and its Influence on the Study of Theology in Sweden."

"Up to the time of his extreme old age he interested himself in the administrative, financial, and political affairs of his country, as well between as during the sessions of the Swedish Diet. A considerable number of papers on these subjects, partly preserved to the present day, bear witness to his activity as the head of his family, and show how great an interest he had in the debates which took place in the House of Nobles. As at one time an ill-informed religious zeal attempted to present Swedenborg as an

apostate from the Evangelical church, so a no less misinformed political zeal sought to fasten upon him the suspicion of being a partisan, and of being influenced by an exaggerated love of opposition. Both of these charges are without foundation, and he can be justified in regard to the one as well as to the other. As a member of the House of Nobles, Swedenborg belonged neither to the party of the 'Hats' nor to that of the 'Caps' in those times; but was an independent member, supporting whatever he saw to be worthy of his own position, and to be right and generally useful, without allowing himself to be influenced either by the right or the left side. He, like every true friend of liberty, was opposed alike to despotism and to anarchy. As the son of a distinguished and universally beloved bishop, he was ennobled by Queen Ulrica Eleonora in 1719, together with his brothers and sisters. His entrance into the House of Nobles was, therefore, cotemporaneous with the re-establishment of freedom in Sweden. During his childhood and youth he had witnessed the misfortunes into which an unlimited monarchy precipitated his country. He himself had seen the misery and distress which a war of eighteen years' duration, with dearly-bought victories and bloody defeats, with decimated armies and bankrupt finances, attended by pestilence and famine, had brought upon his country. He could not be convinced that a few conquered standards, exhibited in the armory at Ulricksdal or in the church in Riddarholm, could compensate the people for the sweat, the toil, and the lives that had been wasted. Need we wonder, then, that Swedenborg was in favor of a constitution which set bounds to the arbitrary power and whims of a hitherto unlimited monarchy; which prevented the dissolution of the country, and gradually changed discontent into satisfaction, at least among the majority of its citizens? Swedenborg enjoyed the good fortune, envied by many, of having been able during half a century to influence by his vote the resolutions passed for the welfare of his country, and of not giving up his place in the House of Nobles before the year 1772, when death closed his eyes to the darkened prospects with which a change in the administration threatened Sweden's independence. Swedenborg thus belonged to the whole of that period of freedom which is valued so highly by many, and is made light of by others. With that period his political career began and ended. The reader will probably desire to know the position which the Seer took as a member of the Diet,

and what resolutions he had to propose on various questions. We shall, therefore, communicate some of the papers which he laid before the Diet. They furnish the clearest proofs of his statesmanship, and explain, moreover, his political standpoint."

These party names of Hats and Caps should be explained, as they are continually recurring in the history of Sweden in those times. They seem as unmeaning as the English Whig and Tory; but it was not quite so. Charles XII. inflamed the Swedes with a war fever. Their military success and world-wide fame under Gustavus Adolphus, "The Lion of the North," had left its influence. When Charles XII. died, in 1718, he left his kingdom prostrate and exhausted; but his people clung to his memory for his military glory, although he had brought much suffering on them. At the same time, the nation was then heartily sick of war. But, after some fifteen years of peace had restored their prosperity, the military spirit began to revive; fostered, not only by those who loved war for its own sake, but by the poor nobility and others who hoped to find means of subsistence in military commissions and the like. These persons, in the party slang of the day, charged those who were for the preservation of peace with wearing their *nightcaps* all the time; meaning that they were a sleepy set, and indifferent to the glory of their country, and they were called the party of "Caps;" while, to those who wished to revive the military glory of Sweden, the name of "Hats" was given. Between these parties, not the House of Nobles only, but the people, were divided. Swedenborg was, as the book just quoted from states, an independent member; so far, at least, that he was not enrolled as an active partisan. But his sympathies were with the Caps in their efforts to preserve peace, although he differed from them on some other points. The first document we have on this subject is entitled, "Memorial to the Secret Committee of the House of Nobles on the impolicy of declaring war against Russia." It is dated 1734, when Swedenborg was forty-six years old, some ten years before his illumination. So we will say no more of it than

that it is long and elaborate, covering the whole ground. Dr. Tafel says that the arguments for peace "are set forth in a masterly manner. There is every reason to suppose that this memorial exerted a great influence in the Secret Committee of the Diet, of which Swedenborg was a member, and that it was partly due to his influence that his country was saved for six years longer from the horrors of war and the humiliation of defeat."

In 1741 Sweden declared war against Russia, and was defeated. The nation was again impoverished and lost a large part of Finland, which has ever since been Russian; and so violent a reaction set in against the war, that General Lewenhaupt, the Swedish commander-in-chief, was put to death for his ill-success. It will be seen, presently, that the strong excitement of this time left enduring consequences, affecting Swedenborg's position and conduct as a Swedish noble many years afterwards.

The next thing I will speak of is Swedenborg's zeal and prudence as a Temperance reformer. It is well known that there is in Sweden an immense consumption of alcohol. On the fly-leaf of one of his theological manuscripts, he wrote, "The immoderate use of spirituous liquors will be the downfall of the Swedish people."

Dr. Tafel found a fragment of a memorial presented to the Houses of the Swedish Diet in 1755, among Swedenborg's manuscripts in the Academy of Sciences. He gives it in his first volume as Document 179. Swedenborg proposed several measures to the Swedish Diet, with a view to lessen the waste of grain in the distillation of whiskey, and the mischief resulting from the immoderate use of what he calls "so pernicious a drink."

He was earnest enough in his desire to suppress intemperance to satisfy an extreme temperance reformer. But he never forgot that a law which went so far that it lost the support of public opinion would be not useful, but harmful. Thus, in a later memorial, presented to the Diet in 1760 (for he was firm and constant in his adherence to these tem-

perance views), he says, in respect to a proposed measure, "if the public can be prevailed upon to accede to the measure."

This measure was something like our license system. He proposed to farm out the right of distilling alcohol to a certain number of persons, by auction. This he supposed would be useful, first, by lessening the number of distillers; then, by increasing the price of whiskey; and, lastly, by making it an important interest of an influential body of people to detect, prevent, and punish unlawful distillation. He held that a large income, which Sweden sorely needed, might be raised in this way. But how insignificant the money seemed to him in comparison with the suppression of intemperance may be inferred from his proposing this measure, "if the consumption of whiskey cannot be done away with altogether, which would be more for the country's welfare than all the income which could be realized from so pernicious a drink." This measure Swedenborg prevailed upon the Diet to adopt; but how long it continued, or what was its effect, we do not know.

Another measure which he recommended in his memorials to the Diet was intended to compel publicity, and reminds one of recent legislation in Massachusetts, prohibiting the use of screens in shops where liquor is sold and drunk, behind which drinkers may hide. He proposed "that all public houses should . . . have an opening in the window, through which those who wished might purchase whiskey and brandy without being allowed to enter the house."

Perhaps the most important subject on which Swedenborg was engaged for many years, as a member of the House of Nobles, and in reference to which he made his greatest and most continuous efforts, was the restoration of the finances of Sweden. What these efforts were, we learn from many memorials of Swedenborg to the House of Nobles and from other documents, running along in the years 1760 and 1761, and afterwards. It would seem as if his whole time in these years must have been given to the subject. The documents

of various kinds prepared by him which we have, and which imply the existence of others which are lost, are sufficient for the work of an industrious man during this period. To understand them requires a frequent reference to the history of Sweden. And all we can attempt is to offer a very brief account of his views and his work in relation to this matter.

The kingdom of Sweden passed through an experience not entirely unlike that of this country. At the death of Charles XII. it was prostrate, poor, and heavily in debt. Its foreign credit was very low, and the necessity of resorting to paper currency, as in our late war, made the rate of exchange still more against it. So things continued for some years. Then business began to revive, and the question came before the people and the Diet, what could be done to restore the credit and prosperity of the country. Two ways were open. One was to keep up a large supply of paper money resting on the credit of the nation, so as to sustain the commerce of the country, and supply the funds which were necessary to carry it on. The other way was to return as soon as possible to specie currency, and aim at that result in all financial measures.

Upon this question the people were divided, and so was the government. The controversy raged for years. During all of them Swedenborg took an active interest in it. At first the paper-money theory prevailed. But from the beginning Swedenborg stood on the side of a metallic currency; from this he never swerved. In memorials to the House of Nobles, which appear to cover the whole ground, and in papers of various kinds, he pressed his views upon the government. One of these memorials Dr. Tafel found among Swedenborg's manuscripts and prefaces by the following statement: —

"The immediate cause leading to the preparation of this memorial is stated by the biographer of Nordencrantz, in his Biographical Lexicon, as follows: 'Meanwhile the confusion in the course of exchange increased from day to day. . . . This caused a meeting of the Diet to be called in 1760,

in which a committee of finance was appointed, which afterwards was changed into a secret Deputation, and of this Nordencrantz was a member; in it he was at first a shining light, but by a change in the parties he lost his great power, and the Deputation finally passed a resolution which differed very much from Nordencrantz's views." This change of sentiment and action Dr. Tafel attributed to Swedenborg's influence in large part, and the Documents seem to justify him in this opinion.

The Nordencrantz here mentioned was a member of the House of Nobles, and seems to have been the leading opponent of Swedenborg. At first he prevailed, and paper money was freely issued. But in the end the measures urged by Swedenborg in favor of a specie currency were preferred. Nordencrantz, whose whole course seems to have been erratic and hardly intelligible, now withdrew from politics, and held himself aloof for a while. The next we hear of him is in the session of 1763, when he became reconciled to Swedenborg, and seems to have changed his views utterly; for now he joined Swedenborg in introducing a plan which was adopted by the Diet. This was, that the circulation of paper money should be limited to the amount of bullion in the bank. But, while they agreed in this proposal, they differed widely as to the method of reaching the result they desired, which was the establishment of a specie currency. Nordencrantz was in favor of more decisive and energetic measures. Swedenborg proposed to reach this result more slowly and gradually. Again Nordencrantz prevailed, and the result was that the measures adopted increased the difficulties instead of lessening them, and it became necessary to modify them very much.

The readers of the common lives of Swedenborg may remember that, in a letter from Count Hopken to General Tuxen, he says, "The most solid and best written memorials at the Diet of 1761 on the subject of finance were presented by Swedenborg. In one of these he refuted a large work on the same subject, quoting from it all the corres-

ponding passages, and all this in less than a sheet." This book was one published by Nordencrantz; and Swedenborg's review of it was found by Dr. Tafel among his manuscripts, and is given in full as Document 181. It seems to justify Von Hopken's description of it.

As a sample of Swedenborg's way of dealing with the great question, whether paper money or metallic money should be the currency of the country, we may quote from Document 174. After a most intelligent account of the way in which the country had reached its present position by the use of paper money, he says, "Hence it is that for a time our country has been outwardly rich and inwardly poor."

He does not object to paper money, if duly limited; and, after detailing the measures he recommends for this purpose, he says, that, if they are adopted, "the certificates of indebtedness now in the market will be replaced by bank-notes which not only represent money, but to all intents and purposes are money."

He closes a memorial (Document 175), which is contained in Dr. Emanuel Tafel's "Documents" also, thus: —

> "The general bankruptcy on all this paper money stares every man, willing to reflect upon the subject, in the face. What, then, can save the country from ruin? . . . Many proposals may be devised for forcing down the high rate of exchange, and arresting the dearness; but they are all of little value, except the one proposal, the purpose of which is to restore a specie currency, such as has existed in Sweden heretofore, and exists in all other countries in the world; for in coined specie itself lies the real value of exchange, and consequently that of all merchandise. If any country could exist by means of a paper currency, which is in the place of money but is not money, it would be a country without a parallel."

To show that Swedenborg was constant in his adherence to this principle, we may refer to another Document, which is the next Document published by Dr. R. L. Tafel, which closes in almost the same language.

It must be remembered that these documents are only

those which the exhaustive labors of Dr. Tafel could discover. He has searched diligently for documents and papers of all kinds of Swedenborg's preparation or concerning him. He began this search in 1868 — only four years less than a century after Swedenborg's death. It was the first earnest and systematic effort to collect such papers or to preserve them. While we rejoice that this effort was so successful, we must not forget that only the remnants of a large mass of similar paper could be recovered at this late day. The documents themselves are often fragmentary, and sometimes imply the existence of others like them, which cannot now be found.

And yet how perfectly decisive they are on the question we are considering! that question is, Was Swedenborg an insane man during the year after 1744, in which he wrote and published his theological works? The answer they give to this question is this: The man of whom you ask, Was he insane during this period? was through the whole of it a sitting member of the House of Nobles in Sweden. He was a frequent attendant at its meetings. He entered very earnestly into the discussion of most important subjects; presented memorials on them, some of which we have now and can study for ourselves, and find in them the soundest logic, calm, quiet, and convincing reasoning; all employed in presenting the most rational arguments for the most judicious results. All this while it was perfectly well known by all who knew him, that he had given up secular pursuits generally, and was diligently occupied in writing and publishing large theological works of the most original and peculiar character. In these works he asserted, with great frequency and distinctness, that his spiritual senses were open, and that he was in the different regions of the spiritual world, as much at home there as in this natural world; and we have abundant evidence, that, while he never obtruded this fact upon any persons, he never withheld it when the statement was called for.

Now, how was this man treated during this period by his

peers in the House of Nobles? We have no evidence that the slightest intimation was ever made by any one of the least suspicion of insanity. We cannot expect positive and direct testimony to any man's sanity; and, if there were such testimony, it would itself be a suspicious circumstance. If you could bring forward a dozen witnesses, each of whom would testify that he had heard a certain man's sanity positively asserted, this would prove that it had been frequently questioned; else why should it have been asserted? The best testimony you could have of any man's sanity would be, that there never was a word said about it. It would be simply impossible to prove any man's unbroken and unquestioned sanity by the way in which he was uniformly treated by those who were nearest to him, and who must have known him best, if Swedenborg's is not so proved. During all these years he engaged earnestly in the discussion of the most important questions which came before the Legislative body of which he was a member. He had opponents, and party-spirit ran high. Every opponent knew, of course, that a suggestion or hint of insanity, if it had the slightest foundation and were not absurd on its face, would do more than anything else could do to break down his influence and defeat his efforts. But no such hint was ever offered. Perhaps it may be said there was a forbearance from the use of this deadly weapon, out of courtesy, or a regard for well-known and universally acknowledged goodness. We have a little bit of evidence on this point. Nordencrantz was a strong man, but ill-tempered and violent. He was naturally irritated by Swedenborg's conclusive refutation of his book, of which Baron Hopken wrote to Tuxen. He replied to it, and Dr. Tafel gives us this reply. It shows that he was deeply wounded, and felt that Swedenborg had demolished him; for it is violently abusive. He called Swedenborg's review of his book a libel and a calumny, and a lie of the most infamous kind. In fact he abuses him most heartily and without the least restraint. But the hardest blow he could have given, would have been a charge or insinuation

of insanity; but not the slighest intimation is there of anything like this.

Another of the memorials presented to the Swedish Diet by Swedenborg, found among his papers, and already published in Dr. Emanuel Tafel's Documents, was in defence of Von Hopken, Von Palmstjerna, and Von Scheffer. Von Hopken had been Senator, and Prime Minister of Sweden; Von Palmstjerna Senator, and an active member of the Cabinet of which Von Hopken was chief; and Von Scheffer was also a Senator. They were certainly among the most distinguished members of the Swedish Government. A violent party movement connected with the foreign relations of Sweden and with the changes in its Government, which have been already alluded to, compelled them to resign their offices in 1761. Then followed long and earnest discussions. In the life of Palmstjerna in the Swedish Biographical Lexicon, as quoted by Dr. Tafel, the writer says: "The sharpest of these [memorials] and the severest speaker was, we believe, Assessor Emanuel Swedenborg, otherwise less known by his speeches at the Diet than by his spirit visions." Here we have proof of Swedenborg's position in the Diet of Sweden. Upon this question, on which not merely the victory of a party in the Government, but the position and power of the sovereign and the foreign relations of Sweden depended, it is clear that he took an active and a prominent part; not only in writing by his memorials, but in debate: and we may add, a successful part; for within a year the sentiment of the Diet was so entirely changed that the three statesmen whom Swedenborg defended were invited to return to the Senate and resume their places.

It cannot be imagined for a moment that Swedenborg would have assumed the position not merely of a defender of these statesmen, but of a leader in their defence, laying down in his memorial the grounds on which it should be conducted, without the concurrence and assent, not to say the request and appointment, of those whom he thus successfully defended.

And now the question arises, Would these eminent statesmen have accepted his advocacy, or would the Diet have listened to or endured his "sharp" memorials and speeches, if there had been the slightest suspicion or suggestion that this earnest speaker and writer was insane? And is it conceivable that, in the violence of this debate, which stirred up the passions not of the Diet only, but of the nation, to their depths, such a suggestion would have been withheld if it could have been made without bringing contempt on the maker?

There is still another incident in Swedenborg's life as a statesman of great significance upon the question of his sanity. We have seen that he was active and influential upon the question whether the currency of Sweden should be paper or coin; and that he continued his efforts for many years. After this controversy had gone on for some time, somewhere in 1761 a memorial of Swedenborg to the House of Nobles, preserved among his papers, shows that "a private Commission on Exchange" was appointed by the Diet, and charged with the consideration of the whole subject.

Of this Commission Swedenborg was invited to be a member.

Now, what does this mean? The extract just made from the Swedish Biographical Lexicon says that Swedenborg, otherwise than by his efforts in favor of Hopken, Palmstjerna, and Scheffer, "was less known by his speeches at the Diet than by his spirit visions." The writer of the biography in which this occurs had no occasion to refer to Swedenborg's memorials or speeches in matters not personal, for they could not help him in preparing his Lexicon; but we know from the documents we possess in how many other subjects he was interested and active. The remark is, however, valuable; because it confirms the abundant evidence we have, that Swedenborg was widely "known by his spirit visions." Of course the nobles and other members of the Diet knew perfectly well his position in this respect. If Swedenborg was, during this long period, a broken and

insane man, we must choose one of these two alternatives: either the Diet in which this crazy man had been an active member for many years, taking part both by pen and by speech — not occasionally but persistently — in the most important discussions, supposed him altogether sane, or else they appointed him a member of this most important Commission, supposing him all the while to be insane! In either case, the Diet so appointing him must have been itself insane.

THE BEGGAR AT THE GATE.

A Beggar sat by the Beautiful Gate,
By the Beautiful Gate of the Temple;
With patience and prayer did the poor beggar wait,
And his pitiful morsel he thankfully ate,
By the Beautiful Gate of the Temple.

The beggar was poor and old and lame;
In spirit so humble he took without shame
The pittance of meanest or noblest that came.

Of Peter and John he asked an alms;—
The strange reply his soul alarms,
But the merciful words were full of balms.

"We bring thee neither silver nor gold,
But what we have is treasure untold;
And this for the needy we freely hold.

"Rise up! we command thee in Jesus' name;"
"Rise up!" they say to him who was lame;
And strength to each limb with the summons came.

And the man arose and went his ways;
Into the Temple he went, to praise
For the joy that had come to his later days.

Once I did beg at the Beautiful Gate,
  At the Beautiful Gate of the Temple;
For rare-given alms did impatiently wait —
  But the gifts they were small, and hunger was great —
At the Beautiful Gate of the Temple.

And One there came so heavenly fair
That my soul went up in a flame of prayer;
But, alas! my words seemed idle air.

Yet His tones came sweet as angel choir:
"My favor to thee will be as fire,
So much it shall outrun desire.

"Be whole," He said, "of thy life's bane;"
And he touched my heart with a ceaseless pain,
While the tears beat down like the autumn rain.

The root was bitter, the fruit is sweet,
  By the Beautiful Gate of the Temple;
And I praise Him now where the lowliest meet;
  I praise Him, too, at the Cherubim's feet,
Past the gate and the vail of the Temple.

REVELATION.

In a previous article,* we endeavored to show that reason, of itself alone, was insufficient to discover spiritual truth.

We pointed out its limitations, and stated that the religious theories of rationalism did not give the rest, the certainty, one desired; and we concluded, therefore, if we would know the facts of our higher nature,— of the spirit-world and of God,— we must have a supernatural revelation. We presented the Bible as such a revelation, and claimed that the arguments of sceptics against it, founded upon the letter and its apparent meaning, could be met and answered by showing that there was within the letter a higher meaning, for which it was given and to which it was subordinate; and, in continuation, we purpose to treat of the object and necessity of revelation, and the internal meaning of the Divine Word.

In the whole universe, as far as we know, we see an established relation of sense and object, of demand and supply. As the mechanism of the eye and the ear implies things to be seen and sounds to be heard; the sense of smell, odors; and touch, things to be felt: we would rationally conclude that the same law would hold good in regard to the spiritual department of our nature,— that our capacities, each and all, point to their corresponding objects; that the faculty of conscience implies a distinction between right and wrong; that the organ and sentiment of veneration points to an object to be loved and adored; and that from our spiritual faculties and capacities, which render us conscious of spiritual things, we may and do assume the existence and reality of the spiritual world, as from sensible perceptions and impressions we assume the existence and reality of the natural world.

*See number for February, 1881.

Our capacity to believe in the future world, our intense desire to know in regard to it, implies that there is a future to be known, as much as the desire of food implanted in our physical nature denotes something to satisfy that want. We long to know of that Being who excites our worshipful feelings; long to know our relation to him, and his relation to us. Now, are these aspirations toward God and toward heaven,—this yearning for spiritual knowledge,—to be mocked? Although there are those who claim to believe in a self-existent and self-organized universe, yet all the phenomena of nature seem to teach infinite and intelligent Power as the first great cause; at least, when this idea is presented to the mind, it seems so consistent and rational that nearly every one accepts it: but reason cannot tell us in what relation that Infinite Power stands to us, or we to it; it cannot tell us anything of the future,—whether we live again or are annihilated; humanity feels the *need* of a heavenly Father's love, and desires to know whether the Infinite power is Infinite love also; Nature and Reason are voiceless; the presence of evil, pain, injustice, in the physical and moral world causes us to think that there is no providential love over us, and the lamp of reason sheds no light into the dim region beyond the present; but these faculties that make us alive to noble thoughts and sentiments are the foundation of religion in the soul of man; and although the ideas which relate us to spiritual beings and truths do not come through any of the senses by which the outer natural world is revealed, yet they are just as much a matter of consciousness as any fact of nature.

We are as certain of the feeling of sympathy, or of the fact that we venerate something higher than ourselves, as we are of any object without us. Indeed, the consciousness of interior, spiritual sentiments or feelings seems nearer and more certain than the knowledge of external things.

These sentiments or feelings come *not* through reasonings, yet we cannot doubt the evidences of them any more than we can the testimony of the senses. And so we can see

here the necessity of a revelation to meet these desires of our hearts, and answer the questions which every awakened spiritual nature cannot help asking. And can any one see anything irrational in the idea, that God should communicate knowledge to his children capable of knowing him and rejoicing in his love? In our ignorance and sinfulness we have wants, which, of ourselves, we can never supply; and we would think it very rational that, if there is a God of love, he certainly would make clear the truths necessary for man's spiritual well-being and happiness.

The idea of God as Infinite power is not sufficient for the human soul; we may satisfy ourselves from what we see around us that God is, but may not know what He is. There is an infinite distance between the First Great Cause and ourselves. We may see inexorable law, and may fear, but cannot love; and, as far as we know, rationalism, in attempting to explain the origin of nature and the character of its source, arrives at no sure foundation upon which men can build a religious system which shall give rest to their souls.

Amid bewildering opinions, we desire to know what is true and what is false; what is good and what is evil. We desire to know the *object* of our life here on earth, the design of our mingled experience of happiness and misery; and we yearn for a higher revelation from which we may learn these hidden things.

It is true, many deny that there is a spiritual world; others deny the existence of a physical world. We cannot demonstrate the reality of either by reasoning; but we believe in the reality of both, because we are so constituted that, with our impressions and perceptions, we cannot help it.

We can give no greater proof of our own existence, of our own individuality, than to say that we are *conscious* that we live; no argument or reasoning upon the subject can make it more manifest to ourselves or to others; and if consciousness on this plane of the sensual and intellectual nature proves the existence of ourselves and the natural

world in which our physical nature may become developed, and its wants satisfied, so consciousness on the plane of the moral and religious nature and necessities gives us as good evidence that there is a moral and spiritual world which can furnish everything that man needs for the development of his moral and spiritual being.

Now, with those who believe only in Nature and Reason, the great difficulty, that they are not able to see spiritual things, is that they require evidences to the natural senses instead of truths addressed to the spiritual understanding. As our knowledge of sensual or material things depends to a great extent upon our coming into relation or contact with them; so, spiritually, we must come in contact with spiritual truth and goodness — that is, must have *experiences* of them — before we can have spiritual discernment. We read that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The reason why the natural or worldly man, one who looks not above the present world for light upon spiritual things and for motives of life,— the reason he does not see spiritual truth is because he has not put himself into real, that is, living, communication with spiritual things. He has not exercised the capacity to see them, so he is in no condition to see things of the Spirit, in the only way in which they can be known, by actual experience or personal consciousness.

If the natural or unspiritual man would see spiritual things, he must become spiritually minded: the capacities for a new and higher life are within him; but as he must place himself in communication with natural things, become obedient to the natural laws of his senses, before he can see or hear, so he must obey the spiritual laws of his being, which are the precepts of the Word, if he would be brought into the assurance of spiritual realities; and he will soon realize that what seemed before unknown and improbable has now become a reality of personal conviction.

Many of the Lord's sayings clearly teach that what is called spiritual insight does not depend upon intellectual culture, the ability to reason, or upon learning of any kind, so much as it does upon the states of our will or love: "The pure in heart shall see God." Our spiritual convictions and sensibility keep pace with our loving obedience to spiritual truths; in a word, according to our living the truth. What sceptical minds need, is not only to be convinced by arguments of the reasonableness of religion, but to be made to feel and know its reality from personal consciousness.

Now, we are ready to ask what may be the standard by which we can test revelation. Chiefly, it will teach us concerning those things which nature and reason cannot teach: not scientific facts, nor a mere scheme of morals; but it must reveal God and spiritual truths, and the relation which man holds to them; and this we find that the Bible, in its spiritual sense, does.

To prove such a sense, let us first look at the declarations of the inspired writers. David prays, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy law;" and if there had not been "wondrous things" to be seen in the law, why should he thus pray? And in the 78th PSALM we read, "Give ear, O my people, to my law, incline your ear to the words of my mouth; I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old." And these words are followed by the narration of the history of the children of Israel; and must we not then infer that this history is also a parable, and therefore so lived and so written as to contain spiritual things, having relation to the human race at all times?

"A literal people represented the spiritual people of God; a natural Egypt represented a spiritual Egypt of human bondage to sin; a natural deliverance, the picture of a spiritual redemption; a natural journey, a spiritual pilgrimage; a natural warfare, a spiritual conflict; a natural tabernacle put for the tabernacle of the soul; the literal offerings, for spiritual sacrifices; literal feasts, for spiritual sacraments; natural captivities, for spiritual backslid-

ings; a Jerusalem after the flesh, the type of Jerusalem that is above: and when we once candidly examine the writings of the New Church, and have the key to the spiritual sense, we see, with David, that the whole history is a parable."

The Lord spake in parables to the Jews; and it is declared, that without a parable spake he not to them; all that he uttered possessed an inner meaning, which was recognized to a certain extent by his disciples, but was veiled from the unbelieving. We will illustrate by a few passages: "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; if thy hand offend thee, cut it off;" "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." No one would think of interpreting these passages literally. And he emphatically declares "that the flesh profiteth nothing;" "The words that I speak unto you are spirit and are life;" and there was a Divine significance in his words: they were the outer covering of a Divine meaning, as His flesh and natural faculties were the outer covering of the Divine Love.

The Lord says that "the Scriptures testify of Him;" many predictions are applied to Him, which in their literal sense refer to other things; but, in the spiritual sense, it is clearly seen that they all refer to Him, and thus we can see the propriety of the injunction, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me," and also of the declaration, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." Any one but little familiar with the "Arcana" of Swedenborg can see that this is really true. After the resurrection, we read, "Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." There must, then, be a meaning in the Scriptures to perceive which requires the opening of the understanding by the Lord.

On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit was poured out upon the disciples; the people were astonished, and charged them with being drunken. Then Peter answered, "This is that

which was spoken of by the prophet Joel, 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; upon my servants and handmaidens I will pour out of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy; and I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

Peter's understanding, being opened, saw in these startling predictions that the inner sense of these prophecies pertained not to natural or external disasters, but had direct reference to the events of that time and day. He saw beneath the literal meaning the spiritual things to which these wonders in the heavens and the earth referred,—that they were symbols or representatives of spiritual things. Speaking of the deluge, he says that the ark and Noah and his sons were figures or types; that circumcision after the flesh symbolized the circumcision of the heart; and that the rock from which the Israelites drank was the figure of the spiritual Rock, which is Christ; that the tabernacle and its ceremonies were but symbols of the true worship; that Jerusalem below was the type of Jerusalem that is above, the mother of us all; that Abraham and his two sons were an allegory. One reading the letter to the Hebrews carefully cannot fail to see that, from the way the author interprets the Jewish history, he understands it, as David did, to be a parable.

How can one read the book of Revelation, and fail to see that it cannot be understood in any other way than by admitting another sense than that of the letter? We learn from history that such spiritual method of interpretation of Scripture did exist to a greater or less extent among the early Fathers; and in many passages, modern commentators

now avail themselves of what seems to them an inner sense, to obtain some meaning which is rational and not to be seen in the letter. But, not having a true method of interpretation, there is no uniformity in their explanations. The day, however, is come when the true key is given for the interpretation of the dark passages of Scripture; which does not lessen the value of the literal sense, but fills it with grander meanings for our more complete instruction in spiritual things; and this key to unlock the symbolism of the Bible is found in the writings of Swedenborg. And, as Paul expresses it, "The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead.

SALVATION.

It is to be regretted that many persons think of God as one person, and of their Saviour as another; not reflecting that, whoever their Saviour is, it must be the God in him, the Divine and not the merely human, that saves them. It is evident that men cannot save us. It can be done only by that something which is Divine, Infinite, and Almighty, and it is this which we call God. That God is the Saviour, and that there is no other, is distinctly declared in the Old Testament Scripture: as in Ps. cvi. 21, where it is said of the children of Israel, "They forgot God their Saviour;" in Is. xliii. 3, where it is said, "I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour;" in the 11th verse of the same chapter, "I, even I, am Jehovah; and beside me there is no Saviour;" Is. xlv. 15, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour;" and in the 21st verse, same chapter, "There is no God else beside me: a just God and a Saviour: there is none beside me;" and in other places.

Nor is this declaration confined to the Old Testament. In Luke i. 46 and 47, it is put into the mouth of Mary to say, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." The apostles also speak in the same manner; as in 1 Tim. i. 1, which verse reads, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God, our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, our hope;" the 3d and 4th verses, 2d chapter, same epistle read, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth;" iv. 10, "Because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men;" Titus i. 3, "But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God, our Saviour;" ii. 10, "Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things; iii. 4, "But after that the kindness and love of God, our Saviour, toward man appeared," etc; and in the 25th verse of Jude, "To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen."

This settles the fact that both in Old Testament times and New Testament times God was the Saviour. But in the New Testament we have another class of passages. In Luke ii. 11, we read, "For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord;" John iv. 42, "And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savionr of the world;" the same is very frequently declared also in the Acts and other writings of the apostles. In Acts v. 31, speaking of Jesus it is said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins;" 2 Tim. i. 10, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ;" Titus i. 4, "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour;" ii. 13,

"Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" iii. 6, "Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;" 2 PETER i. 11, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and in other places.

Now, there are four ways in which these declarations of Scripture and of the Epistles may be disposed of: The first is that which does not recognize any distinct personality as belonging to the Divine Being, and consequently that there is any such thing as a distinctive revelation from him; in which case, of course, we are not bound to harmonize the different declarations, because we may assume that they are erroneous. This may be called the Free-Religious way. The second is that which regards God as one person, and Jesus Christ as another person, inferior to him; in which case all the powers of Jesus Christ as Saviour would be regarded as having been delegated to him, but as really existing in the other person called God. This may be called the Unitarian way. The third is that which regards Jesus Christ as one of three persons, each of whom is God, in which case God the Father is not the Saviour, except through the second person; and the Holy Spirit is not the Saviour, except as an instrument of the second person. This is the Trinitarian way.

We will not stop to discuss these three ways, but proceed to the fourth, or the doctrine of the New Church, which, if once clearly perceived in the mind, will dispel the others as banks of fog are rolled away and dispersed by the rising of the sun. We take to ourselves no credit for this doctrine, for we believe it to have been revealed from heaven by the Lord himself in his Second Coming.

God and Jesus Christ are one Person. God, invisible to the world and before he came in the flesh, was God the Father: his *name* as God invisible to the world was Jehovah: God in the world, or as to that whereby he was in the world, was God the Son: his *name* as a man in the world

was Jesus Christ; but after he ceased to be outwardly visible he was still present in the world, but as a Divine Man: that whereby he is thus present is God the Holy Spirit, or he is now present as the spirit; in other words, he is now spiritually present as a Divine Man; there is accordingly in him that which is denoted by the Father, that which is denoted by the Son, and that which is denoted by the Holy Spirit. These make or constitute his person, and his present name to the world is the Lord Jesus Christ, or simply the Lord.

Thus God is the Saviour, and the Saviour is God. God came to be Jesus Christ. God and man are in him one person, and there is no person out of him who is God; for the Father is in him as a soul in its body, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from him, or is himself in his operation. In the light of this doctrine the Scriptures harmonize, our desire for what is rational is satisfied, our instinctive sense of the unity of the Divine Being is met, and our reverence for the divinity of Christ and of the Scriptures is preserved and exalted.

God thus became the Saviour for the sake of salvation: he came to save man.

It is not sin alone that creates the necessity for a Saviour. An angel in heaven needs a Saviour as truly as the worst man in the world. We need God as a Saviour because we are finite, created beings, and have no life of our own. We must receive it every moment from God. To love God and each other, and to think and act in accordance with this love, is true life. By receiving it from God we are saved from the lack and the perversion of it. He is thus our Saviour when we are good. But if we have lost such love, and the intellect and character which accompany it, God only can give us the necessary strength and aid to recover ourselves. Thus, if we be sinners, God only can give us the necessary aid to enable us to come back to goodness.

It may be that God would have manifested himself in the flesh for the development of the race, even if man had re-

mained good: much more was it necessary, for the sake of salvation, that he should so come when men had fallen into evil life. Our personal need of a Saviour, therefore, does not rest upon the fact alone of our having done wrong; but upon the necessary limitations of our finiteness, and the fact of our not having life in ourselves. As good beings, we need to receive good life from God; as sinners, we need him also as the Deliverer from evils into which we have fallen.

There is no such thing under the Divine government as punishment in the sense of vengeance, or revenge, or of paying back the individual for an injury done. There is no such arbitrary infliction. The soul itself is in the human form; it is an organized spiritual body, now with us, within the physical body; it is not within it in the sense that a hand is within a glove; it is rather *with it* at every point. The spiritual body is a body that is so present with every particle of the natural body as to keep that particle in its form, and give it its life and its connection with the rest of the body. The Divine commandments are the laws of health to this spiritual body, just as the laws of physiology are the laws of health to the physical body. Sin makes an organic change in the spiritual body, or affects it organically in like manner as uncleanliness, carelessness, exposure, vice, or the taking of a slow poison, affects the physical system. Sickness, disease, or accident in the physical sphere answers to what is called punishment in the spiritual sphere. The evil consequences, in this case, are the result of the same laws as in another case would bring or secure happiness and health. If the violation did not bring evil, nothing could bring good. The evil consequences of sin are a standing warning to us not to sin. The Lord's relation to them is precisely the same as is his relation to a physical disease which follows a transgression of the laws of our physical nature. Our physical salvation is not a deliverance from a particular disease while we continue that practice which causes the disease, for such a salvation would be impossible. No fault is to be found

with the consequences, but with the practice that brings them.

Salvation in a spiritual sense, in like manner, is not at all a deliverance from what is called the punishment of sin, except as it is a deliverance from the sin which causes it. Hence no such idea as that the second person of a trinity of persons came into this world and suffered in man's stead, in order to deliver him from the wrath of the first person, and from the penalty due to his sin, has any place in the New Church. In the first place, the Father and Jesus Christ are the same person, and there *is* no trinity of persons; in the second place, it is in no case desirable or possible to remove the penalty of sin, except with the sin itself; and, in the third place, no one who is innocent can suffer in the room and stead of another who is guilty, any more than one man who has not violated a physical law can be sick for another who has. One person did not come into the world for the benefit of sinners, as against another person who was left behind. There was no such person left behind. God came himself, and his coming was not a coming from one place to another, for he is omnipresent; it was a manifestation of himself in the precise place where he was invisibly before; and he did this for the salvation of men, and by this salvation is meant that he took means to win them to the love of himself; that is, to the love of the right and the good, and so to an abhorrence of all that was evil and wrong, or had been so, even in themselves. It was a great undertaking to get men to love him, as against themselves; but this he undertook, because he was Divine, and he is still carrying out with us the same work.

It should not be thought that God became a Saviour wholly by coming into the world, for he had been a Saviour before. He is so called before that time, in the Old Testament; but by coming into the world he continued to be the Saviour, even in the exigency which had then arisen. He became the Saviour in a new sense and in a new degree.

Consequently, the world had not been left unsaved even

before he came in the flesh. He did not come to recover a salvation which had actually been lost, but rather to preserve salvation from being lost, and permanently to secure it for the future.

God does not save man all by himself alone: he cannot do it: he must have the co-operation of the man; for man is not saved when he is simply held up by force in the love of what is good and right, but when he does this freely or from choice. Man cannot do this alone; but he can do it by co-operation. What was needed, therefore, for salvation was not the piling up of influences and helps on the side of good, and the removal of attractions on the side of evil. If this were all that were necessary, every one would have been good. It would have been just as fatal to man's salvation if the attractive side of evil had been all kept out of view, and man had been allowed to see only the advantages of good, as it would have been for him to have been able to see nothing on the side of good, and only evil were presented to him. Motives, influences, and attractions on one side or the other do not *make* men choose: the will is free. The salvation that God provides and preserves is this *freedom*. This makes it possible for them to become good, and just as possible as for them to become evil. It is the possession of this freedom on man's part that makes it of any use to do anything for him. Without it, nothing in the way of good would be of any avail. This freedom of the will was in danger of being lost; and, as this is an essential quality of man, if this had been lost it would have resulted in the total destruction of man as man.

This freedom is the result of spiritual equilibrium, or a balancing of forces in the spiritual sphere, in like manner as freedom of bodily motion is the result of a balance of forces in the physical sphere. Action and reaction are equal. There is a pressure, for example, of the atmosphere upon the surface of the body; but there is a corresponding pressure from within, which balances it, and the equilibrium between these forces is what gives the body freedom of

motion. Good is an active spiritual force: evil is a reactive force on the same plane. Every man is spiritually in the midst of the two forces. The sphere of good in which man is as to his spirit is formed and sustained by the persons in the other life who are good: the sphere of evil is formed and sustained by the persons in the other life who are evil. By the tendencies to good, which we have either inherited from parents and ancestors or acquired by practice, we are connected with the sphere of the good; by tendencies to evil, similarly inherited or acquired, we are connected with the sphere of the evil. If these spheres, not in themselves, but as they affect us, are equally strong, then we are in freedom, and are able to become good because we are in freedom; but, if the sphere of evil were allowed in its effect upon us to become so strong as to overbalance and shut out the sphere of good, then we should be without freedom, and should be totally unable to become good; in which case we should also, at the same time, lose all responsibility; we should be evil and do evil, and not be to blame for it; that is, humanity would be destroyed in us,— we should cease to be human beings. But here the Lord came in. His own sphere and that of the angels and good spirits was infinitely powerful in itself, but not as it affected men in the world. The sphere of evil had no power in itself; but there was danger of its having all power as it affected men in the world. Hence the Lord came into the world. He took on power, not in himself absolutely, but in himself as reaching and affecting men. He brought down the sphere of good to the same plane where the sphere of evil was, and where it had entrenched itself. What was liable to destroy the equilibrium of the two spheres was the continuous going to the other world, and the predominance there of evil men; for in the other life those who have recently gone there are more near in their influence and effect upon men still in the natural world than any others in that world: but the Lord's coming into this world as a man with his Divine sphere, and

then going from here into the world of spirits, just as other men did, was equal to what the influence and effect of millions of good men would have been — indeed it was almighty — but still he did not exert it as almighty to the extent of destroying the evil, because that would, at the same time, have destroyed man himself, and, of course, have destroyed the spiritual freedom which he came expressly to maintain and preserve. This power the Lord still maintains and uses. He does not keep evil influences from us; but he keeps them from overpowering us. He suffers us to be tempted, but he does not allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear; neither does he allow us to be so drawn toward good that we do not have to exert ourselves to the extent of our power and the best of our ability to go in that direction. We have to resist evil and put it away, so far as we are able; which ability, indeed, would be nothing in itself, but he supplements it with his strength, which is infinite. We have to approach toward good as of ourselves; that is, with all the power that we seem to have: but he, at the same time, draws us with his own power, which is almighty. We must shun evil as of ourselves and do good as of ourselves; for in our so doing our manhood consists, at the same time acknowledging that the power we have to do this is of the Lord alone.

The fact that we must shun evil as of ourselves,—*i. e.*, so far as we seem to have power to shun it,— and that we must do good as of ourselves, or as far as we are able to do it, gives to the good the natural and proper credit that is due to them for being and doing good, and lays upon the evil the blame that they rightfully deserve for being and doing evil. Men are not good because God has made them good; and they are not evil because he has made them evil. God does not make men good by withholding evil influences from them, except as they co-operate with him in repelling those evil influences; nor are men made evil, except as they work against God, and co-operate with evil spirits and influences, which make them evil. Salvation is deliverance from evil

in disposition, thought, and act, and the establishing in us of what is good and right in disposition, thought, and act. The Lord has provided for this in securing to man spiritual freedom. Man has the freedom,— it has been secured for all. If by virtue of this freedom he receives salvation, it gives him heavenly happiness here, and finally heaven itself; if he abuses it, all that the Lord has done by coming into the world will not save him.

So far as man's individual state, in relation to salvation, is concerned, we can see it but very obscurely in the present life; because we are here but in the beginnings of things, and the real nature of everything in human character is so largely covered by appearances. Those who are at heart good, or in whom are the beginnings of good, have often about them many of the appearances of evil and many actual evils which they will some time put away or overcome; while many who finally confirm themselves in evil life put on for the time many outward appearances of goodness, which serve their turn, but care less and less to do it as they grow older.

The world of spirits, which is the place of man's first occupation after death, is not a place of the formation and decision of character, but of its development and confirmation. It needs experience, then, to render certain *to us* the real state of man as regards salvation. The Lord only knows with certainty our state while here. Practically, however, we may know men well enough by their fruits; and we shall see our own state either clearly or obscurely, according as with a decided or a vacillating mind we seek the accomplishment of our regeneration, as to us the great work of life.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

Abiel Silver was born on April 3, 1797, in Hopkinton, N. H., ten miles from Concord. His father was a man of great integrity of character, and of a fine, vigorous, mathematical mind, constitutionally averse to subscribing to illogical statements. His mother was affectionate, practical, very devoted to her children, and so great a reader of the Bible that it was said that if any text were repeated to her she could give the one following; but this is, undoubtedly, too strong a statement.

Abiel was the fifth of eight children, and, as a boy, was so perfectly truthful, that, when conflicting statements were sometimes made by the children about their little affairs, the testimony of Abiel was considered as final, it being generally accepted that "Abiel would not tell a lie."

The person outside of his own family who undoubtedly exercised the most important influence in forming his character was Judge John Harris, of Hopkinton, who was, perhaps, twenty years his senior, and was highly educated, talented, and a sincerely devoted Episcopalian. He not only assiduously fostered the religious elements in the boy's mind, and stimulated his intellect, but did him valuable service later, through letters of introduction to influential men in New York State, thereby extending his opportunities for social culture and for the companionship of superior minds. It may as well be stated in this connection that within a recent period ninety-nine letters written by Mr. Silver to Judge Harris came into the former's possession, the recipient being no longer living. These letters, being written in the most intimate possible terms, by one man to another, and covering a long period of years, gave a quite minute transcript of Mr. Silver's mind and heart; and to his family, who alone were permitted to see them, they gave evidence of the purity, sincerity, and strong religious bias of the writer's character in early life.

Abiel's education (his father having limited means) consisted of that of the common schools, of tutorship under Judge Harris, and of instruction at the Phillips Academy at Exeter, N. H.; but, being ambitious and hungry for knowledge, he learned much through books alone.

He early joined the Episcopalian Church, and for twenty-three years was a devoted worker in it; although he declined Bishop Hobart's urgent solicitation that he should enter its ministry, on the ground that he could not conscientiously teach doctrines that he did not clearly understand Long after leaving that church, however, he was repeatedly heard to speak affectionately of it; saying, "The Episcopal Church has been a good mother to me, and has kept me from a great deal of evil."

May 16, 1825, he married his long-loved playmate and neighbor, Ednah Hastings, and went at once to the home he had previously made at Waddington, N. Y., on the St. Lawrence River, engaging in business there for five years. His wife's health failing, he spent about a year in and near Saratoga, and then, in 1831, removed to Cass County, Michigan, on the great main thoroughfare between Detroit and Chicago, and engaged extensively in mercantile life. About 1837 he lost an arm through a slight accident and subsequent bad surgery; but he learned to regard this seemingly untoward event as one of the greatest blessings of his life, because the sensations permanently remaining after the fleshly covering was gone convinced him of the truth of Swedenborg's statement, that man has an organized spiritual body, and that the senses belong truly to it. His first knowledge of the New Church came about 1839, from Mr. Edwin Burnham, an earnest young receiver of the doctrines, then in Detroit; and from this circumstance ensued a life-long friendship between them. Mr. Burnham's brother Lyman, of Brooklyn, writes under date of April 1, 1881:—

"And how well *I* remember the happiness of my dear brother Edwin, in Detroit, over forty years ago, when he came home late at night and told us of a conversation he had just had with Mr.

Silver about the New-Church doctrines, and how delighted he was! And how many times since then have I thought of that night, and of the important and happy results which have followed! And now I hope they will meet in heaven,— bright, useful, and happy angels!"

Mr. Silver carried some New-Church books home with him from Detroit, but did not at once make the fact known to his wife, fearing to disturb her feelings, although he told her of his conversation with Mr. Burnham. But she, discovering the books very soon, in a drawer, began reading with equal interest and delight; and, for a short time, until they mutually discovered each other's position, she travelled by his side toward the higher light without his knowledge.

Near the close of 1841, Mr. Silver first met Rev. George Field, and delighted in his earnest and able exposition of New-Church doctrines; and, having been previously very much isolated from congenial religious companionship, he used every effort to further his new friend's ministerial labors, and worked heartily with him for many years. Mr. Field, referring to this early period of their acquaintance, after speaking of other zealous receivers, says:—

"And Mr. and Mrs. Silver were no less earnest and indefatigable in their efforts to make known, to all who had ears to hear, the beautiful truths and glad tidings of great joy which are now made known to the world in the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem."

At a meeting of the Michigan Association, held at Battle Creek, on Jan. 3, 1844, Mr. and Mrs. Silver, with others, were baptized by Mr. Field.

For four years, from 1846 to 1849 inclusive, Mr. Silver held the office of Commissioner of the State Land Office at Marshall, then the capital of the State. The New Church in Michigan at about this period was very ably represented by influential men, who worked earnestly together and whose friendship was perennial. Among them were Digby V.

Bell, Auditor-General; Lucius Lyon, Surveyor-General of the U. S. and later member of Congress; John Allen and H. P. Bush, State Senators; Amos T. Hall, State Treasurer; Rev. H. N. Strong, Chaplain of the State Prison; Henry Thielson and Robert H. Murray, State Engineers, and Hans Thielson, Pay-master of Michigan Railroad. On June 16, 1849, Mr. Silver, and his warm personal friend, Jabez Fox, were ordained into the New-Church ministry, I think at Philadelphia, by Rev. Thomas Worcester.

Mr. Silver's health being seriously threatened, he returned in 1853 to his native hills, remaining five years and instituting a New-Church Society at Contoocook, N. H. His subsequent career is too well known to record in detail. He preached four years in Wilmington, Del., four years in New York City, two years in Salem; and in May, 1868, at the age of seventy-one, commenced at Roxbury the thirteen years' labor which has just visibly terminated on earth. During the first three years of this period, he also preached at Brookline; but he always considered Roxbury his chief field, the labors there being largely among those who were beginners, and whom he most loved to help. In December, 1870, a Society (comprising forty-nine members) was instituted, which he has many times called "the pet of his old age," and which he fearlessly labored to the last to bring up to his own high standard of what a society should be. And its members may feel sure that his blessing and loving interest will still hover over it.

FUNERAL SERMON.

"And I say unto you, my friends, Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."

Both by His words and by His example the Lord taught His disciples that the death of the body is not to be feared; that it is only the occasion for the resurrection of the spirit to a purer life.

So firmly was this believed in the Primitive Christian Church, so sure were they that their Lord had risen, and that, upon the death of the body, they who loved the Lord and His teachings would rise into a life far happier than this, that the grief of Jews and heathen at the death of loved friends gave place with them to rejoicing; no lamentations were inscribed upon their sepulchres, but expressions of joy that they had risen to that happier life with the Lord whom they so much loved, and dear friends who had gone before. A truly Christian faith they had, that their Lord had risen, that He had gone before to prepare a place for them, and that when they died He would receive them into blessed life with Himself.

With them, as with us, the death of the body was often attended with suffering; but the suffering was counted as joy, so great was their gladness at the approaching resurrection into life. Occasionally also, no doubt, as to Stephen, at the approach of death the heavens were opened to them, and comforting visions of the Lord and of angel friends were vouchsafed to them.

All the essentials of Christian faith which belonged to the Primitive Church, and more besides, belonged also, so far as we are permitted to know one another, to our beloved friend who has risen from among us. He loved and believed the Holy Word, as he loved to call it, with all his heart; he believed, as fully as those who saw Him, that our Lord has risen, and has prepared a place in the heavenly home for all who love Him. He loved and trusted the Providence of the Lord over all the events of this life. It has been his habit for years, when any danger occurred to him, to resign himself unreservedly to the heavenly Father's care,—not so much for natural as for spiritual protection; that, whatever might become of his body, his spirit might be thereby brought only the nearer to the Lord, more fully into accord with His will. No visions of the spiritual world were his; but it was just as real to his thought and his feeling as the natural world: he delighted in thinking of it,— with increasing dis-

tinctness as the friends of youth and manhood were gathered there,— in studying and teaching about it. In his latter years, it probably was more in his thoughts and far more in his affections, than the natural world.

It is impossible not to believe, therefore, that when the last great danger came to him, though he would as a duty to the Lord and to his friends do all he could to save his natural life, when he saw that this was not to be, he yielded like a little child, and turned to the Lord and toward that loved heavenly world, his face beaming with heartfelt joy.

Not immediately upon the death of the body does the spirit leave it. It was the morning of the third day when our Lord arose; and so, likewise, for two or three days a peaceful presence lingers about the body, showing itself in the sweet expression of the face, and then vanishes forever. In the New Church we are taught that as two angels were seen by Mary, sitting one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of the Lord had lain, so angels sit by every spirit during the short sleep of death, holding the mind in the pleasant things of eternal life, and gradually communicating their own heavenly thought and affection as far as these can be received. We are taught also that the purpose of this communication is that they who rise in the spiritual world may not be friendless, nor exposed to evil influences, but may be received by the kindest of the angels, for whose companionship they have been thus gently prepared while they were passive; and that they are exposed to less heavenly influences, only as they of their own free choice and act associate themselves with other spirits like themselves.

Thus kindly has our friend been prepared and received into the spiritual world. Save for the temporary separation from loved friends here, for whose coming he will trustfully wait, the change is all gain to him. He has left his maimed and infirm body, and risen in his perfect spiritual body, which now for the first time he sees, though he always thought he felt it,— a perfect human body, formed for every exercise of human sense and usefulness, and wearing the

same expression of friendliness and intelligence by which he has been known here, and will be known forever.

He wakes in the world whose light is the light of wisdom from the Lord, and whose heat is the heat of His love; a world in which spiritual things are the substantial realities, and in which he will have every opportunity to perfect and increase indefinitely the spiritual wisdom he loved. And not only opportunities to acquire wisdom will he have, but enlarged opportunities to impart; for thousands of persons are flocking daily to that world from this who know nothing of its mysteries, and scarcely that it exists, who need every instruction as to the nature of the world into which they have come, as to the Lord and His Word, and the preparation for homes in heaven. The knowledge which he has always been so eager to impart, now made more perfect, is just what these thousands need to learn; and in the opportunity to teach them, to explain to them what they see, and to help them forward on their heavenly journey, he will find his heart's delight.

So upright and blameless was he in his life, so full of zeal for this very use, that though when we think of it in the spiritual world it seems like, and it is, an angel's use, yet with a brief opportunity for the purification, expansion, and correction of his thought, he will give himself to it heart and soul. All his delights, as with every good man, will be exalted. One who has loved the Lord's commandments and the guidance and protection of his Providence will there most sensibly feel the Lord's love for him, and will be sensibly taught and guided and cared for by the Lord. To one who has loved the Holy Word of the Lord, that Word will open and reveal in abundance the wise and loving thoughts of the Lord for angels and men; and to him whose heart is full of friendly love and desire to serve, there will be no lack of loving friends and interchange of friendly service.

SWEDENBORG STUDIES.

SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL ATMOSPHERES.

In a brief but important chapter "On Degrees," printed by Dr. J. F. I. Tafel, in Part vii. of the "Spiritual Diary," pp. 98 to 103, Swedenborg makes the following statement in regard to the atmospheres. Italics are used to call attention to the point to be considered.

"There are three natural atmospheres emanating from the sun of the world, and three spiritual atmospheres emanating from the sun of heaven, which is the Lord. The three natural atmospheres emanating from the sun of the world are the purer ether, which is universal and the source of gravity; the middle ether, which makes the vortex around the planets, and the satellites, in which is light, and which is the source of magnetism; and the lowest ether, which is the air. The three spiritual atmospheres arising from the sun of heaven are those in which the angels of the three heavens are; the angels in the Lord's celestial kingdom are in the two higher; those in the Lord's spiritual kingdom are in the third, and *in the first natural, which is the pure ether;* men, while in the world, are in the two following, which are the mediate ether, and the lowest ether, which is the air."—p. 100.

The intensely important scientific bearing of these declarations is not now to be dwelt upon; but attention is called to the somewhat unexpected statement, that instead of men on earth having to do solely with the natural atmospheres, and angels solely with the spiritual, the two highest of the spiritual belong to the celestial angels, the two lowest of the natural to men on earth; and the lowest spiritual and highest natural to the angels of the Lord's spiritual kingdom. The passage has been found to be correctly transcribed from the manuscript, which is very plainly written. It is believed to have been written about the year 1760, and therefore to have preceded a little the published treatise on "Degrees" in the "Divine Love and Wisdom."

However unexpected the statement, it seems to accord closely with various other passages, in connection with which it opens up a most interesting subject. Compare it with D. L. W. n. 257, where we read: —

"The natural mind consists of spiritual and also of natural substances; the latter recede when the man dies. They make the cutaneous envelope of the spiritual body, in which angels and spirits are. By means of this envelope, taken from the natural world, their spiritual bodies subsist; for the natural is the containing ultimate."

To this, join T. C. R. n. 103: —

"Every man after death lays aside the natural which he derived from the mother, and retains the spiritual which he derived from the father, together with a certain bordering (*limbus*) about it from the purer things of nature."

In D. P. n. 220, it is said that at death "a man puts off the grosser things of nature, but retains the purer, which are nearest the spiritual." Similar language is used in D. W. of A. E. viii. So it is said that the "inner natural communicates with heaven" (A. C. n. 9215); and in S. D. n. 4627 enumerates the degrees of the external man as the "sensual, the natural, and the spiritual natural," and of the internal man as "the celestial of the spiritual, the celestial, and the inmost."

Thus, he gives us the idea that, when men die, there still remains with them, in a quiescent state, a subtile natural basis, not earthly, nor airy, nor even ethereal, but of the degree of the third natural atmosphere, or the aura, which is much purer and of wider extent than the others, filling all the star-spaces and forming the great connecting influence throughout the natural universe. And in this, and in the lowest spiritual atmosphere, dwell the lowest angels. Of these Swedenborg says (S. D. n. 5547), "The spiritual angels are in the internal natural."

The bearing of this preservation of the inmost natural upon the permanence of the memory is a most interesting subject; but it cannot be entered upon now.

A quotation, in closing, from that important but unfamiliar book, the Coronis or Appendix to the "True Christian Religion," will sum up the subject: —

"Both worlds, the spiritual as well as the natural, consist of and subsist from three atmospheres or elements: the first of which most nearly surrounds the sun and is called the aura; the second is below it, and is called the ether; the third is below these, and is called the air. In the natural world, these three atmospheres are natural, and in themselves passive, because they proceed from a sun which is pure fire; but the three in the spiritual world corresponding to these are spiritual, and in themselves active, because they proceed from a sun which is pure love. The angels of heaven dwell in the regions of these three atmospheres: those of the highest heaven, in the celestial aura which most nearly surrounds the sun where the Lord is; those of the middle heaven, in the spiritual ether below them; and those of the lowest heaven, *in the spiritual natural air*, below them both."— n. 17.

All six atmospheres, the spiritual and the natural, are spoken of in that most valuable, general account of the creation in T. C. R. n. 76.

MISQUOTATION OF A. C. N. 1414.

In a recently published sermon, a minister used the incorrect expression as to the Lord, "glorification of his maternal humanity." Several correspondents of the *New Jerusalem Messenger*, in which the sermon had appeared, objected to the words. To them the writer of the sermon replied by using the following quotation: —

"The human derived from the mother was infirm, but it was brought into perfect correspondence with the Divine."— A. C. n. 1414.

A further objection was then made that this passage could not be found in n. 1414; to which the Editor of the *Messenger* replied that this was true, but that the quotation was to be found from Rich's Index of the "Arcana," article "Lord," (25), and added that there was evidently some mistake, "but what the mistake may be, we do not know."

Swedenborg's own index is an important part of the "Arcana," and solves this difficulty at once. It says under "Dominus," "quod apud Dominum solum correspondentia humani cum divino, n. 1414, f." To translate, "that in the Lord alone was there a correspondence of the human with the divine, n. 1414, end."

He makes a second reference to the number under the same head, saying, "that the hereditary of the Lord, from Jehovah was divine; from the mother, evil, n. 1414." He makes similar reference to the same number under "Haereditarium."

N. 1414 is so remarkably full and clear a statement of the exact truth, that it is to be regretted that there should be so harmful a misstatement of it as Rich's, and so loose a practice as to quote from Rich instead of from Swedenborg, thereby producing a grave misapprehension as to the accuracy of the teaching.

BOOK NOTICES.

THE EDEN TABLEAU, OR BIBLE OBJECT-TEACHING. By CHARLES BEECHER. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1880. pp. 163.

THIS book is interesting as showing a desire to find out the symbolic meaning of the first part of Genesis. Despite the appearance of flippancy, which appears in the title and everywhere, the book is written in a modest and candid spirit, and merely suggests an interpretation. The writer makes no attempt to appear as a discoverer. The style is very sprightly; but the writer has no more light than he gets in the idea that the story contains ancient political history, just as prophecies are understood to refer to future political history. The two trees stood for two princes, one a good, the other a dangerous leader; the serpent, for an organization in heaven; and so forth. If Mr. Beecher and others like

him could only have a perception of the correspondence between the spiritual and natural,— of which, indeed, they say much, but have no idea,— they would see at once the imperfection of their speculations and the wisdom of the interpretation which, through Swedenborg, the Divine Author has given of his own parable. For by revelation only can we reascend to the wisdom of antiquity, when the meaning of symbols was perfectly well known.

Lectures on the New Dispensation. By B. F. Barrett. Philadelphia E. Claxton & Co. 1881. pp. 328.

This is the eleventh edition of a well-known and valued work, which is now offered in good binding, paper, and type, at the price of sixty cents. The lectures were written in their first form about forty years ago, and were prepared for popular audiences, consisting largely of those who were either uninformed as to the New Church, or were prejudiced against it. It is not difficult to see that they were admirably adapted to this purpose, and that their republication in the regular channels of the trade, at so low a price, will greatly extend their usefulness.

It is to be hoped that the Swedenborg Publishing Association's example, in respect to cheap editions, will not be lost upon our Board of Publications.

Chinese Immigration in its Social and Economical Aspects. By Geo. F. Seward. New York: C. Scribner's Sons. 1881. pp. 420.

This book, written by one whose residence in China, as United States Minister, gave him opportunity to study the Chinese question on all sides, is worthy of a fuller notice than our space can admit. Mr. Seward shows from figures the indispensable usefulness of the Chinese in California in various industries; and then considers fairly the charges against them. The whole argument seems complete and unanswerable. Certainly, no New-Churchman in America can stand on any other footing than impartial justice for all; and here Mr. Seward stands opposed to the Secretary of State and others, and pleads for an oppressed race, with the simple facts about them as his argument. His side will prevail.

The Platonist. St. Louis, Mo. Vol. I. No. 1.

It is not strange that the reaction against the feeble agnostic philosophy of the day has revived an interest in Platonism, which

was wise with truths derived from a still greater antiquity. But it would be as well to publish it in strong Saxon as in the stilted terms found here, and the contempt of "the rabble" in which the "philosophic few" indulge is provincial.

The Bote der Neuen Kirche, Rev. A. O. Brickman's German paper, comes monthly, with eight pages of good material for building up the church among our German population. The Editor's address has been changed from Allentown, Penn., to No. 281 East Fayette St., Baltimore, Md.

MONTHLY NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Preaching with Power.

The Methodist Bishop Peck, in a stirring sermon to ministers lately, said: —

"It follows that all the pains which men take to get up sermons (so-called), by way of accommodating popular belief and preaching popular prejudice, and so resulting in the avoidance of Jehovah incarnate, may be something to literature, may be something to oratory, but it is *nothing* to the gospel — absolutely nothing."

"*First with a Few.*"

How clearly the subjoined extract from a Baptist paper tells of the fact that the woman must be for a time "in the wilderness," and the reason for it, can be read between the lines! "And Swedenborgianism has never been strong enough for the observer to tell whether it is really growing or not. Here and there it picks up a convert; but its disciples are 'a feeble folk,' and they have no prospect of ceasing to be such."

Old and New Theologies.

Under this head, Prof. G. R. Crooks, D. D., Methodist, discussed, in a recent lecture, the progress of the age toward a new theology. "The signs of a demand for a new theology are so

many that he who runs may read them," said he, and he quoted several interesting declarations of leading minds. Dr. W. M. Taylor "had expressed the hope 'for a shorter, simpler, less metaphysical, and more comprehensive creed.'" Principal Sharrp of St. Andrew's, Scotland, was quoted as saying: — "It needs no divine to tell us that this century will not pass without a great breaking up of the great dogmatic structures that have held ever since the Reformation or the succeeding age. From many sides at once a simplifying of the code, a revision of the standards, is being demanded."

Dr. Philip Schaff had said before the Presbyterian alliance in Edinburgh in 1877: — "A Confession which would intensify Presbyterianism and loosen the ties which unite us to other branches of Christ's Church I would regard as a calamity. We want a wall to keep off the wolves, and not a fence to divide the sheep; we want a declaration of union, not a platform of disunion." The five knotty points of Calvinism have lost their point, and have been smoothed off by God's own working in the history of the Church."

Dr. Crooks spoke of the great Evangelical movement which began "in the middle of the last century," and said "It waits for a historian, but can wait till its work is completed in the renovation of theology itself. That theology will be pervaded throughout by the consciousness of redemption."

In Memoriam.

We are called upon to record the departure to the higher life of two valued contributors, whose usefulness as such was but a small part of their helpfulness in the cause of the New Age.

Rev. Abiel Silver's earthly work was brought to a sudden close; but to one like him the summons brings no shock. As we sat in the tasteful Roxbury church, at his funeral, we recalled the fact that forty years of age had found him a merchant in the Far West, apparently likely to spend all his days in such a use; but he eagerly received the "doctrines," when first brought to his notice, soon began to lecture about them, was afterward ordained, and ever since, wherever he has been, has been a zealous Evangelist. The remarkable success which attended his labors in Roxbury seemed to be due, under Providence, to his persistent, and always kindly, energy in meeting the needs of all he met. His mind, as is well known, was much with those who were coming into the

church; and his feeling toward all men was brotherly and appreciative. His last day in this life was spent at Salem; and it was on his way home that the end came,—a speedy release to one whose last words might well have been, "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; I have not refrained my lips, O Lord! thou knowest."

Mrs. M. E. A. C. Brown was a woman of unusual gifts, as her contributions, both in prose and verse, have testified. Always active in church work, she died in Boston, March 17, 1881, at the age of seventy years.

Scientific Protest Against Materialism.

Lionel Beale, in his annual address as President of the Royal Microscopical Society, refuted the opinions of Haeckel & Huxley. We give a few of his conclusions:—

The phenomena of living matter are not due to the properties of the matter.

Life-force or power has not been and cannot be evolved in any way from matter only, nor is it a consequence of changes occurring in matter; but, on the contrary, life influences and determines changes in the matter.

The assertion that any low forms of life are near to or establish any transition toward the inorganic is not justified by any facts known to science.

The attempts made to make the public believe that the so-called properties of living matter belong to the same order or category as that in which known properties of known forms of non-living matter can be included are not to be justified by an appeal to facts, and are, therefore, contrary to the principles of science.

Every vital phenomenon is absolutely different in its nature from every physical (mechanical or chemical) action. There is no analogy whatever between the two sets of phenomena.

The present state of knowledge justifies the conclusion that no form of living matter existing at present, nor any one which existed in the past, directly originated from non-living matter, or in any way derived its powers or properties from the non-living.

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